

REPORT TO	ON
Council	27/09/2017

September 2017



TITLE	REPORT OF
Central Lancashire Employment Skills Supplementary Planning Document	Director of Development, Enterprise and Communities

Is this report confidential?	No
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### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To seek adoption of the Central Lancashire Employment Skills Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Council adopt the Central Lancashire Employment Skills Supplementary Planning Document attached at Appendix 1.
2. That the Council delegate authority to the Planning Manager in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Housing to make any minor text, layout and formatting changes on the publication of the document.

### 3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

The report relates to the following corporate priorities

Clean, green and safe		Strong and healthy communities	
Strong South Ribble in the heart of prosperous Lancashire	X	Efficient, effective and exceptional council	

### 4. BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) offer local planning authorities the opportunity to add guidance in specific policy areas. They are documents that must be prepared in consultation with interested parties, and must be subject to a screening process to discover whether a sustainability appraisal would be required. Unlike Development Plan Documents (DPDs) SPDs do not require independent examination before they are adopted.

This proposed SPD will become part of a suite of Central Lancashire SPDs that have already been adopted in accordance with the Local Planning Regulations and the National Planning Policy Framework, conforming and responding to all relevant local and national policies, and based upon a robust and up-to-date evidence base. These SPDs form part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) for the Council, and the other Central Lancashire authorities. They are to be considered alongside policy in the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and the South Ribble Local Plan.

One of Central Lancashire's priorities is to encourage economic growth within Central Lancashire that benefits the people and businesses in the three boroughs. This involves increasing employment opportunities by helping local businesses to improve, grow and take on more staff, helping businesses to find suitable staff and suppliers, especially local ones, and improving the skills of local people to enable them to take advantage of the employing opportunities. The aim of this SPD is to facilitate this by helping businesses already located in Central Lancashire to grow and attract new businesses into the area.

The SPD does not introduce new policies. The SPD provides planning guidance in relation to the preparation of the Employment and Skills plans which supports the implementation of Core Strategy Policy 15: Skills and Economic Inclusion. The SPD has been prepared jointly between the 3 authorities' Planning and Economic Development colleagues and should therefore be taken into consideration from the earliest stages of the development process of any site, including any purchase negotiations and in the preparation of development schemes. This SPD will be a significant positive for the three Councils and will only be the third in the North-West and first in the country that has been jointly prepared.

Planning Committee granted approval to consult on the draft SPD in January 2017. The subsequent 6 week consultation was carried out from Monday 30 January until Monday 13 March 2017. Approximately 3000 individuals, companies, statutory consultees and interest groups were notified of the consultation on the draft SPD. All of the documentation relating to the SPD was available to view on each of the Councils' websites throughout the consultation period. The documents were also available to view at deposit points across the 3 areas, which included the Council Offices and Libraries, and some Post Offices particularly in villages without a library. The consultation was advertised using each Councils' Social Media and by press releases. The consultation was also publicised in Chorley Council's e-zines.

## **5. DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS**

### **5.1 Summary of Consultation**

19 responses were received as part of the January – March 2017 consultation. The issues can be summarised as follows:

- Concerns as to extent of information required to validate an application
- Query how the thresholds have been arrived at as to when a statement is required
- Stress the need for flexibility to acknowledge the fluid nature of projects
- Query policy justification and whether this is spatial planning
- Concerns as to impact upon deliverability of schemes, stifling or delaying development having regard to the advice in the National Planning Policy Framework

Following this, amendments were made to the SPD, which included to:

- Seek to align the document with the National Skills Academy for Construction (NSAFC) approach both in terms of the CIBTA 'Toolkit' and 'Client Based Approach – Local Client Guidance';
- Greater clarity on what the statement will potentially cover.
- Updating of the factual position in respect of the various projects across the three authority areas.

Under the planning regulations, the revised SPD along with a statement setting out the people consulted when preparing the SPD, a summary of the main issues raised and how these issues have been addressed must be made available for a minimum of 4 weeks before it is adopted. The 4 week period took place from Wednesday 28 June until Wednesday 26 July 2017. A further 4 responses were received, three not making comments and one supporting the SPD which the

Councils have noted and which have not resulted in any further additions to the SPD. All 23 responses and the Councils' responses are attached at Appendix 2.

The adopted version will provide clarification in respect of what constitutes a 'Commercial Use'. Therefore it is proposed at paragraph 10.2 of the SPD that Commercial Use will for the purpose of the SPD comprise B1 Business, B2 General Industrial, B8 Storage or Distribution, A1 Shops, A2 Financial and Professional Services, A3 Restaurant and Cafes, A4 Drinking establishments, A5 Hot food takeaways. There may be occasions when the Uses are developed jointly as part of one application and if the cumulative floorspace exceeds 1000sqm a statement will be required.

## **5.2 Content of the SPD**

To complement existing activity and facilitate opportunity in association with economic growth envisaged through this SPD, the authorities will now be introducing the need for the submission of an Employment and Skills Statement with a relevant planning application (with the exception of outline applications). The scale of development that triggers the need for a plan being:

*Commercial Floorspace over 1000sqm  
Housing Developments over 30 units*

The need for an Employment and Skills Statement and what it will cover will be highlighted during pre-application discussions. The requirement for a statement will be included in each authority's validation checklist requiring an update. A statement received as part of an individual application above the threshold will be verified by Employment Skills and Business Support and Planning Policy. Planning Policy will monitor the SPD as part of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy monitoring report.

An applicant will be required to complete an Employment and Skills Statement template providing all the key background factual information associated with the development (see pages 11- 12 of Appendix 1). Further information will be requested by the development management sections on a case by case basis as appropriate.

The Employment and Skills Statement will cover such areas as:

- Creation of apprenticeships
- Recruitment
- Training (NVQ)
- Work Experience (14-16 years, 16-19 years and 19+ years)
- Work Trials
- Links with schools, colleges and university
- Use of local suppliers
- Skills certification
- Support with transport, childcare and work equipment.

Once the content of the Employment and Skills Statement has been agreed as part of the consideration of the planning application, it will be usually be possible to control the implementation of the Plan via a planning condition or subject to an obligation under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 the signing of which will coincide with the grant of planning permission. Specific activities, target numbers, supervision responsibilities and time parameters will be agreed before construction begins. Once adopted, this SPD should be afforded significant weight as a material consideration in determining planning applications.

## **5.3 Next Steps**

Accordingly, the final version of the SPD is being placed before Members for approval to adopt for use for development control purposes. Officers of Chorley Borough Council and Preston City

Council are taking the equivalent reports through their respective approval procedures. Each Council will then follow similar adoption arrangements and the adoption period identified in below.

Following adoption the SPD and adoption statement will be placed on the Council’s website; made available at the Council’s Civic offices and local libraries. Any person aggrieved by the adoption of this SPD may apply to the High Court for permission to apply for judicial review of the decision to adopt the SPD. Any such application for leave to review the decision must be made promptly and in any case not later than three months after the date on which the adoption statement is published.

## 6. WIDER IMPLICATIONS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTATION

### 7.1 Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### 7.2 Comments of the Monitoring Officer

An extensive consultation process has been carried out with regard to the proposed adoption of this SPD. In this context it is considered that the chances of any subsequent legal challenge via judicial review is not great.

Once adopted the SPD will become a material consideration for the determination of those planning applications which hit the specified trigger points.

<b>Other implications:</b>	
▶ <b>Risk</b>	None
▶ <b>Equality &amp; Diversity</b>	None
▶ <b>HR &amp; Organisational Development</b>	None
▶ <b>Property &amp; Asset Management</b>	None
▶ <b>ICT / Technology</b>	None

## 8. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS (or there are no background papers to this report)

Appendix 1 – Employment and Skills SPD  
Appendix 2 - Responses Report

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